"By the end of October, 1917, 99 homeward convoys had been brought in, comprising 1,502 steamers of an estimated total deadweight capacity of 10,656,300 tons, with a loss of 0.66 per cent., or 10 vessels, torpedoed while actually in contact with the convoy. The number of ships which had been sunk after being separated from their convoys by bad weather or the disobedience of their masters was 14. So that the gross total, including these vessels, was only 1.57 per cent. With experience and as masters realised more generally that their safety depended on their continuance with their convoy, the difference between the nett and gross percentage became appreciably less, the figures at the signing of the armistice being 0.78 per cent, lost when in convoy formation and 1.13 per cent, including those which had lost touch with the convoy."

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". . . This meant in effect that tonnage being sunk was no longer for the most part large steamers homeward bound with cargoes, but smaller vessels in the coasting trade, and steamers bound round the coast in ballast to load at Cardiff or elsewhere, with a certain number of ships on their way to an assembly port for outward convoy.[3']

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" Another notable change produced by the convoy system was the practical disappearance

of c sunk by gunfire' which had accounted for a large percentage of the vessels lost prior to August-September, 1917.

The statistics for British ships only, at the end of December, 1917, showed that whereas during